

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

DATE: JUNE 25, 2007

Committee Members Present:

Supervisors Monroe
 Stec
 Mason
 Champagne
 F. Thomas
 Girard
 Sokol

Others Present:

Representing Warren County Economic Development
Corporation:
 Leonard Fosbrook, President
 Peter Wohl, Vice President
Patricia Tatich, Director, Planning & Community
Development
Hal Payne, Commissioner of Administrative & Fiscal
Services
Nicole Livingston, Deputy Clerk of the Board
Phil Tucker, Greater Capital Region Building Trades
Council
Supervisor Merlino
Debra L. Schreiber, Legislative Office Specialist

Mr. Monroe called the meeting to order at 12:55 p.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Stec, seconded by Mr. Mason, and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the May 31, 2007 Committee meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Peter Wohl, Vice President of the Economic Development Corporation, Warren County, who distributed copies of their agenda packet to members of the Committee, a copy of which is on file with the minutes.

Commencing with the first item on the agenda, Queensbury Industrial Park (QIP), Mr. Wohl apprised the Committee of the significant bid response they received for the construction of the road in the Queensbury Industrial Park. He stated the Economic Development Agency (EDA) had approved the bid documents and upon receipt of the construction contracts, a formal agreement would be executed. Mr. Wohl related they anticipated construction to commence approximately the fourth week of July, 2007.

Continuing on with Item 2, Mr. Fosbrook commented that upon the recommendation of Warren County, the Town of Queensbury and Queensbury Central School District, a PILOT (Payment In Lieu of Taxes) program was established for Tribune Media Services. He said the Industrial Development Agency (IDA) was scheduled to meet later in the day and he expected to receive their support as well. The Queensbury School Board had become a partner in the negotiations and, therefore, would have veto power, added Mr. Fosbrook.

Mr. Fosbrook stated an important element to this PILOT Program was the hybrid use of Empire Zone benefits, as well as what assistance the IDA could provide so effectively that the taxing districts did not suffer. He indicated that the benefits of this hybrid PILOT for 15 years was ostensibly the same as those received by the taxing districts over 10 years. In addition, Mr. Fosbrook said, it created a project fund that assisted the developer with items within the IDA legislation.

A variety of options were offered to Tribune Media Services, noted Mr. Fosbrook, including that of a hotel/office complex within the City of Glens Falls; however, he said, it became apparent that opportunity was not viable to their organization. Furthermore, he said, time was of the essence as their lease at their current location expired the same time next year, so construction had to commence soon. Mr. Fosbrook explained other proposals included leasing space at the CNA building or developing a parcel of property in Tech Meadows that was currently in the negotiation process with the Local Development Corporation (LDC) and hotel developers. At that time, Mr. Fosbrook said, Tribune Media Services approached the EDC inquiring about other alternatives, such as relocating their business out-of-state or to another county. The purpose of the EDC, he stated, was to apprise them of all their options, allow them to decide which opportunity best suited their needs, and then assist them in achieving their ultimate goal. He said it was not the practice of the EDC to relocate businesses from one venue to another.

To dispel the myth that Tribune Media Services had not considered relocating to another county, Mr. Fosbrook related that the President of this organization attended the recent school board meeting indicating their preference to remain in Warren County. In response to an inquiry by Mr. Champagne, Mr. Fosbrook commented the hybrid approach had been utilized in other locations but never considered in Warren County. When he recently learned about this PILOT program, he said, he invited the EDC attorneys (Harris Beach) to assist them in maintaining this business within Warren County.

Discussion ensued.

Mr. Fosbrook explained it was the duty of the County to establish a benefit package for businesses looking to relocate in our region and with the cooperation of Warren County, the Town of Queensbury and the Queensbury School Board, who agreed to this PILOT concept, it had now become a model for future businesses.

Mr. Merlino entered the meeting at 1:10 p.m.

Discussion ensued.

In summation, Mr. Fosbrook complimented all of the people involved in reaching an agreement which benefitted all affected parties. He said the legal experience of Harris Beach and their involvement with the local IDA's across New York State, gave Warren County a level of sophistication and competitive edge. The execution of the Master Plan that EDC had compiled four to five years ago consisting of shovel-ready sites and the Exit 18 Corridor, appeared to be developing the way they envisioned, added Mr. Fosbrook. He said he anticipated the contract would be executed within the next two weeks and construction to commence three to four weeks thereafter.

There being no further business to come before the committee, on motion by Mr. Stec and seconded by Mr. Sokol, Mr. Monroe adjourned the meeting at 1:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Debra L. Schreiber, Legislative Office Specialist